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Country programme recommendation**

Panama

Addendum

Summary

The present addendum to the country note submitted to the Executive Board at its first regular session of 2001 contains the final country programme recommendation for Board approval.

It contains a recommendation for funding the country programme of Panama, which has an annual planning level of $1,000,000 or less. The Executive Director recommends that the Executive Board approve the amount of $2,100,000 from regular resources, subject to the availability of funds, and $2,250,000 in other resources, subject to the availability of specific-purpose contributions, for the period 2002 to 2006.

* E/ICEF/2001/12.

** The original country note provided only indicative figures for estimated programme cooperation. The figures provided in the present addendum are final and take into account unspent balances of programme cooperation at the end of 2000. They will be contained in the summary of recommendations for regular resources and other resources programmes for 2001 (E/ICEF/2001/P/L.73).

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Basic data[a] *(1999 unless otherwise stated)*	
Child population (millions, under 18 years)	1.1
U5MR (per 1,000 live births) (2000)	26
IMR (per 1,000 live births) (2000)	20
Underweight (% moderate and severe) (1997)	7
Maternal mortality ratio (per 100,000 live births) (1998)	70
Literacy (% male/female) (2000)	93/91
Primary school enrolment (% net, male/female) (1996)	91/91
Primary school children reaching grade 5 (%) (1990)	.82
Use of improved drinking water sources (%) (2000)	90
Routine EPI vaccines financed by Government (%) (1998)	100
GNP per capita (US$)	3 080
One-year-olds fully immunized against: (1999)	
Tuberculosis	99 per cent
Diphtheria/pertussis/tetanus	92 per cent
Measles	90 per cent
Poliomyelitis	96 per cent
Pregnant women immunized against tetanus	.. per cent

[a] Excerpted from the publication "Progress since the World Summit for Children: A statistical review", prepared as a supplement to the Secretary-General's report "We the children: End-decade review of the follow-up to the World Summit for Children" (A/S-27/3), and therefore may differ from data contained in the text of this document.

The situation of children and women

1. The situation of children and women in Panama remains essentially the same as described in the country note submitted to the Executive Board at its first regular session of 2001 (E/ICEF/2001/P/L.32). However, some new information has emerged.

2. The country note observed that Panama's major challenge for the future is to overcome social exclusion, based on highly uneven income distribution. This is a shared concern reflected in the Government's Social Development Strategy 2000-2004, the ongoing United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) process, the Common Country Assessment, and the situation analysis of children and women.

3. There is also growing concern about the sustainability of social goals achieved during the last three decades. With the slowdown of economic growth in the United States, there are fears of the impact on Panama's dollar-driven economy, including rising unemployment and poverty, and decreased public expenditure for social services. An analysis of current trends suggests that with these changes, poor families may see their incomes and access to basic services decrease, thus aggravating the situation of poor children and increasing social exclusion. The Government acknowledges that basic indicators do not reflect the situation of

indigenous groups, for whom progress towards the goals of the World Summit for Children is often much less than is suggested by national averages. Of particular concern is the situation of girls and women from such indigenous groups as the Ngobe-Bugle, who live in the western part of the country, and the Embera-Wounan, from the Darien region.

Programme cooperation, 1997-2001

4. The current country programme (E/ICEF/1996/P/L.26/Add.1), the second for Panama, includes programmes in children's and women's rights, municipal and social development, and education and life skills, all with a rights perspective. Through close work with government counterparts and partners, significant changes have been seen in the focus of their actions in favour of rights-based development.

5. Key results during the current programme period have included the formulation and ratification of the Juvenile Justice Law in compliance with the Convention on the Rights of the Child; the creation of a national committee for monitoring child rights; the establishment of programmes for out-of-school youth; and the approval of a law mandating universal salt iodization. UNICEF provided technical assistance for those initiatives, and its support was reflected in the strengthening of democratic practices and institutions in Panama, and the mobilization of non-governmental organizations (NGOs), civil society organizations (CSOs) and public opinion leaders to promote legislative and institutional change.

6. In collaboration with counterparts and other partners, UNICEF provided technical assistance to monitor the progress of the National Plan of Action. UNICEF support to the formulation of low-cost models helped to achieve the goals of the World Summit for Children for immunization, infant mortality reduction, basic education, adult literacy, safe water and sanitation, and follow-up of the nutritional status of children and women. With the support of the Kiwanis Club, progress was made in the elimination of iodine deficiency disorders (IDD), as seen in the decline in the incidence of iodine deficiency in endemic areas from 21 to 1 per cent.

7. UNICEF cooperation also played an important role in changing social perceptions about the rights of children and adolescents through the promotion of social awareness and participation, which was linked with changing government perceptions and commitments to child rights. An example of this collaboration was the management of water and sanitation programmes in four rural indigenous districts, which were also supported by the Spanish Committee for UNICEF and the World Bank. In the target areas, water and sanitation coverage has increased from 26 to 80 per cent. Based on this success, the initiative has expanded with a commitment of a $1 million fund provided by the Government of Panama, within the framework of a World Bank social investment loan.

8. Future cooperation will support the Government's Social Development Strategy, reinforce social and institutional commitments to children's and women's rights, and work to increase public confidence in the democratic system as the best means for solving social problems. At the programmatic level, this means enhancement of national capacities for good governance, more efficient public social expenditures and strengthening of monitoring systems that inform citizens on the situation of children's and women's rights.

Lessons learned from past cooperation

9. The lessons learned remain essentially the same as described in the country note. These included the realization that substantive change for the rights of children and adolescents can only come through attitudinal changes at all levels of society about what rights are and how they can be best fulfilled. The mid-term review (MTR) and country programme preparation process both highlighted the need for a rights-based social development plan and institutional framework. While there have been significant changes in policies and social capacities for rights fulfilment under the current programme, much remains to be done to ensure that these changes are sustainable.

10. The MTR also highlighted the absence of a mechanism to monitor rights and recommended the promotion of strategic alliances and the coordination of national efforts to monitor the sustained fulfilment of rights. Information about the rights of children and adolescents must continue to reach and empower citizens to demand accessible, quality social services and the fulfilment of child rights. CSOs and other groups, particularly the media, also have a crucial role in monitoring child rights. During the past four years, there has been a substantial change in the attitudes and actions of the media towards child rights, and an opening of spaces for messages in support of children. UNICEF has acted as an advocate and networker for child rights and been a learning organization, a source of knowledge and technical advice and a non-partisan forum for political debate.

11. Another lesson learned concerns the role of UNICEF in fund-raising in the Panamanian context, where UNICEF has had only limited success, partly because of the unique relationship between NGOs and the private sector. Many local NGOs have been created by private businesses to channel their charitable funds, with most of them focused on traditional service delivery. After having limited success in trying to compete for these funds, UNICEF realized that a better strategy would be to offer assistance to these organizations in their programming. As a result, UNICEF collaboration with these local NGOs now centres on technical assistance and capacity-building to change perceptions about programming for children's rights, and on working to redirect these local programmes from traditional "hand outs" to more sustainable, rights-based, long-term development strategies. UNICEF will continue its fund-raising endeavours with the private sector through the five years of its cooperation in support of this local development and capacity-building effort, as well as seeking other bilateral fund-raising options.

Recommended programme cooperation, 2002-2006

	Estimated annual expenditure (In thousands of United States dollars)					
	2002	*2003*	*2004*	*2005*	*2006*	*Total*
Regular resources						
Institutional development for the sustainable fulfilment of children's and women's rights	325	275	210	130	130	1 070
Social monitoring and alliances in favour of children's and women's rights	225	175	140	120	120	780
Cross-sectoral costs	50	50	50	50	50	250
Subtotal	**600**	**500**	**400**	**300**	**300**	**2 100**
Other resources						
Institutional development for the sustainable fulfilment of children's and women's rights	190	180	180	340	300	1 190
Social monitoring and alliances in favour of children's and women's rights	110	120	120	300	290	940
Cross-sectoral costs	-	-	-	60	60	120
Subtotal	**300**	**300**	**300**	**700**	**650**	**2 250**
Total	**900**	**800**	**700**	**1 000**	**950**	**4 350**

Country programme preparation process

12. The Ministry of Economy and Finance coordinated the country programme preparation process in collaboration with UNICEF, and with the involvement of the Ministries of Health, Education, Youth and Family, Government and Justice, and External Affairs, as well as the Legislative Assembly and the Judicial Branch. Business groups, labour associations, the media, universities, national NGOs and churches also helped to define the strategy and priority programme areas. The "Voice of Children and Adolescents" Network articulated ideas and concerns through consultation with nearly 1,000 children and adolescents as part of workshops held in poor communities with the assistance of NGOs and the Episcopal and Methodist Churches. The Kiwanis Club, a key partner in the eradication of IDD, was also consulted. The embassies of Canada, Germany, Japan and Spain and the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) also contributed to the process.

Country programme goals and objectives

13. The country programme of cooperation will facilitate the development of a rights culture, which will guarantee fulfilment of the rights of all children in Panama over the long term. This will depend on the country's capacity to create an enabling

environment for children's and women's rights and reduce disparities, in the context of a common United Nations commitment to strengthening democratic governance in Panama. Through the proposed country programme, UNICEF will endeavour to reinforce capacities for demanding and guaranteeing the rights of all children and women, including the promotion of "social audit" mechanisms.

14. The overall goal of the country programme is to promote an environment of political commitment and co-responsibility by institutions and civil society for the full, universal and sustainable realization of the rights of children, adolescents and women in Panama. The expected results of the country programme are: (a) the establishment of coordination and oversight mechanisms in public institutions working for the realization of children's and women's rights at national and local levels; and (b) strengthened capacities and commitments of CSOs, communities and individuals to monitor and demand fulfilment of these rights for all children and women in Panama, and the reduction of disparities. Over the long term, UNICEF foresees the sustainability of these commitments, which will bring the Government, NGOs, the media, civil society, communities and individuals together into a sustainable Panamanian movement for monitoring and promoting the rights of children and adolescents.

Relation to national and international priorities

15. The proposed country programme is situated within the framework of the Government's Social Development Strategy 2000-2004 and will contribute to government efforts to reduce poverty, promote access to social services, and foster community participation and decentralization. The specific objectives of the Strategy are to: (a) reduce child malnutrition; (b) increase the coverage, quality and relevance of education; (c) increase the coverage and quality of health, water and sanitation services; (d) help families and socially vulnerable population groups to become fully integrated in the Panamanian economy and society; and (e) foster community and social participation in the formulation, prioritization and management of social programmes. With support from international development agencies and financial institutions, the Ministers' Cabinet agreed to establish a mechanism for a social and institutional audit of the commitments made by the tenth Ibero-American Summit, the Global Agenda for Children and the recommendations of the Committee on the Rights of the Child on Panama's State Party report. The UNICEF country programme will be in line with this planned audit.

16. The proposed programme strategy reflects the priorities of UNICEF as identified in the medium-term strategic plan and the Global Movement for Children. The programme will emphasize legislative and institutional reform, prevention of HIV/AIDS among adolescents, quality education for indigenous girls and women, and integrated early childhood development (ECD) policies aimed especially at female-headed households. The programme will also focus attention on the protection of children, adolescents and women from violence and abuse.

17. The programme is in line with the objectives and priorities of UNDAF, which is currently being formulated, and aims to develop the capacities of national institutions for a better democratic response to social demands. UNDAF has defined two priority areas of common interest for fostering the respect of human rights in Panama: poverty and vulnerability; and democratic governance. UNICEF will make

a key contribution in the latter area. United Nations thematic groups have been organized for adolescent and gender issues, HIV/AIDS prevention, emergency preparedness, and municipal and local development, and UNICEF will participate in the groups on HIV/AIDS prevention and municipal development.

Programme strategy

18. The programme strategy remains essentially the same as described in the country note. Through two programmes, it aims to facilitate increased sharing of responsibility and accountability for the realization of children's and women's rights in Panama with government counterparts, civil society and other partners, and the reduction of disparities in the fulfilment of these rights. The country programme will rely on two main operational strategies: (a) capacity-building of national and local government institutions, NGOs and CSOs; and (b) strengthening of informed participation by and the empowerment of children, adolescents, women and families, as part of a growing social demand for the fulfilment of rights. The programme will foster awareness of and commitment by the Government and civil society to ensure the mobilization and participation of local and national actors in favour of the rights of children, adolescents and women, and disparity reduction. Through this common work with multiple actors in programme activities, it is hoped that the impact of achievements can be multiplied. Key to this will be the provision of timely technical assistance and the generation and diffusion of information and knowledge among all decision makers, families and communities in general.

19. UNICEF has a twofold strategic role: (a) to serve as a knowledge and information source and network builder to provide information on the situation of child rights in support of policy development, legal and institutional reform, and the replication of best practices; and (b) to support the building of social alliances and promote networks of civil society, government and international leaders that work together for the fulfilment of the rights of all children, adolescents and women in Panama, and the reduction of the disparities that currently characterize the situation of many women and children in the country.

20. **Institutional development for the sustainable fulfilment of children's and women's rights**. The programme will help to develop a context for the rights of children and women in Panama through legal, administrative and institutional changes for sustainable compliance with the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. The programme objectives are to: (a) promote legal and institutional reforms and social policy initiatives that aim to eliminate discrimination which impedes the fulfilment of children's and women's rights; and (b) develop sustainable, community-based protection systems that will include the excluded in the most neglected areas of Panama. The programme will have three projects.

21. The project for legal reform will promote the approval and implementation of a comprehensive Law for the Protection of Child and Adolescent Rights and the Municipal Decentralization Law, both currently in draft form, which aim to redefine the institutional context in which child-related programmes are implemented. Once established, this legal and institutional framework will promote a decentralized and inter-institutional approach to children and women as subjects with rights. This will, in turn, provide a context for the more effective operation of public social and

judicial institutions. Specific rules will be created in order to improve the performance of the courts and other public institutions responsible for the implementation of the newly existing Juvenile Justice Law and the Law on the Prevention of HIV/AIDS.

22. The project for inclusive social policies aims to strengthen the capacities of public institutions to design social policies that include children and women who are excluded from basic social services. It will foster the establishment of community- and family-based models for ECD, especially in such neglected areas as the indigenous Ngobe-Bugle and Embera-Wounan communities in the regions bordering Costa Rica and Colombia, and poor urban quarters of Panama City and Colon with a high concentration of female-headed households. Other interventions will provide technical support and promote capacity-building of partners and counterparts working to implement social policies through the delivery of basic services to indigenous and poor urban communities, focusing on basic quality education, health services and relevant educational opportunities for adolescents.

23. The third project, child protection systems, aims to establish and support community-based systems for the protection of child rights. These are integrated community plans, services and networks for action which focus on the protection and fulfilment of children's rights, especially targeting the socially excluded and focusing on the education and participation of adolescents from poor urban, rural and indigenous communities, as well as vulnerability reduction and disaster prevention. The plans will be established in municipalities that have been prioritized because of high levels of social exclusion of children, adolescents and women. The project will also support disaster-prevention efforts, together with the Panama-based Centre for Coordination of Disaster Prevention in Central America and the National System for Civil Protection. This partnership will help to establish "solidarity networks" that include community-based disaster prevention and relief initiatives organized by Christian churches that will continue to function over the long term.

24. **Social monitoring and alliances in favour of children's and women's rights**. The programme will aim to develop knowledge about children's and women's rights and capacities to demand those rights at all levels of society. Particular focus will be given to capacities at the family level to monitor and demand the rights of their children, adolescents and women. The objectives of the programme will be to: (a) support the establishment of a permanent social monitoring system for children's and women's rights; and (b) support the development and strengthening of alliances among social actors and institutions, which will work together to promote the rights of children and women. The programme will have two projects.

25. The first project will focus on the development of information systems to monitor the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. It will support the development of capacities for monitoring and reporting on rights through the development of networks that include public and private institutions, universities, NGOs and CSOs. The project will offer technical assistance for studies on such key issues as child labour and sexual exploitation; work to give civil society and public institutions access to updated information on the situation of children in the country; and develop mechanisms for follow-up of key indicators of child rights. Of fundamental importance will be the promotion of a sense of responsibility among

key actors for the situation of children's and women's rights in Panama, leading to an awareness of the need to take action to improve this situation. The project will be undertaken in coordination with the National System of Demographic and Social Indicators. The National System will provide information to a national commission composed of representatives from the Government and civil society, which will monitor political commitments to children's and women's rights at national and municipal levels. The dissemination of information will, in turn, support such other initiatives as an informal network for children which coordinates the efforts of churches and NGOs in favour of children and women's rights, and the social and institutional audit.

26. The second project, on alliances and leadership, will promote broad social alliances and informed social participation in the defence and promotion of children's and women's rights, and give children and adolescents the opportunity to express their opinions. For example, support will be given to an adolescents' network initiative, which fosters the participation of young leaders concerned with such issues as the prevention of HIV/AIDS, priority treatment for women and children affected with AIDS, drugs, and conflict resolution and prevention.

27. **Cross-sectoral costs** will cover operational support for programme implementation. Regular resources will be used for technical assistance and support to capacity-building. Other resources will fund programme support, particularly in the areas of social audit and child protection.

Monitoring and evaluation

28. The monitoring and evaluation system will focus on the transparent and efficient management of country programme resources. A key element of programme monitoring will be the assessment of increasing counterpart capacities in the pursuit of children's and women's rights. Capacity-building in this area will be a key UNICEF focus, as will the development of effective indicators for assessing the level of counterpart involvement in programming aims. Key results and progress will be assessed during the MTR.

29. The integrated monitoring and evaluation plan (IMEP) will enhance the transparent implementation and evaluation of programme impact. Information gathered through IMEP will be disseminated widely to contribute to a democratic system of accountability. This should also open the door for citizens themselves to engage in the country programme evaluation process and to develop awareness and capacities for social monitoring. Key indicators of programmatic achievement will include the number of laws articulating a child rights perspective which have been approved and ratified; the number of social systems for protection established in priority municipalities; the number of independent mechanisms established for monitoring rights; and demonstrated qualitative changes in attitudes and action for child rights. During the first year of the programme, with support from the Regional Office for the Americas and the Caribbean, effective mechanisms will be established for collecting this data.

30. Monitoring and evaluation will be carried out in coordination with the ongoing UNDAF process, which is being supported by the National System of Demographic and Social Indicators. This system will inform government and United Nations programmes about the actual impact of their interventions, while helping to

strengthen civil society's independent assessment of the situation of children and women.

Collaboration with partners

31. UNICEF support to institutional and legal reforms will take place in the context of a wide inter-institutional effort coordinated by the Ministry of Economy and Finance, the major national counterpart responsible for programme planning and allocation of financial resources. Institutional reform will also involve the Ministries of Education, Health, Government and Justice, and Youth and the Family to improve coordination and oversight of social programmes. Changes in legislation and subsequent institutional reform will require the participation of the Legislative Assembly and the Judicial Branch.

32. The establishment of monitoring systems relies heavily on cooperation with the National Comptroller's Office, universities and the media, which are instrumental in carrying out applied research and disseminating the information needed for effective citizens' advocacy for children's and women's rights. Other social organizations will play a key role in the implementation of the country programme and the achievement of nationwide co-responsibility for children's and adolescents' rights. Business groups and workers' unions are interested in fostering policies for poverty alleviation, and churches in monitoring violations of children's and women's rights at local and national levels, especially concerning child labour, child abuse, and violence against girls and women. Civic groups, including the Kiwanis Club, will support immunization, nutrition, and water and sanitation programmes. The programme will help these organizations to develop larger, sustainable social networks in support of children's and women's rights.

33. UNICEF will also support the creation of alliances between multilateral and bilateral partners. As part of the institutional development programme, UNICEF will work with the Governments of Germany, Japan, Spain and the United States and with IDB. The Government of Spain will support judicial reform, IDB will lend funds for decentralization and the Government of Germany will help to strengthen the institutional capacities of municipalities. In the area of education, the European Union has supported the "PROIGUALDAD" programme, which aims to include a gender perspective in educational and teacher-training materials, and the World Bank will provide loans to finance the expansion of ECD programmes, the elaboration of educational materials and the strengthening of rural schools. The Bank will also continue, in collaboration with UNICEF, to support the water supply programme begun in the previous programme period. IDB will support curriculum reform in which a rights approach has been emphasized as a cross-cutting issue.

34. Fund-raising activities will aim to foster more efficient and sustainable use of public resources devoted to children and women, using the information provided by the social monitoring systems. The resource mobilization strategy of the country programme will have two objectives: (a) to obtain greater governmental support to finance the activities carried out by the institutional development programme; and (b) to mobilize international donors and the local private sector in support of the social monitoring programme. In addition to using these funds for its own operations, UNICEF will also seek to influence the use of donor resources in favour of wider investments in the fulfilment of rights and social monitoring.

Programme management

35. The country programme will be coordinated through a National Coordinating Committee, the institutional body responsible for planning, implementing and evaluating the programme and disseminating information on achievements and constraints. The Committee will be guided by a three-member executive secretariat comprised of the Ministry of Economy and Finance, the Ministry of External Affairs and UNICEF. Other United Nations agencies, the Social Cabinet, the Legislative Assembly and the Judicial Branch will also participate. Consultative status will be granted to civil society delegates from the Ngobe-Bugle, Embera-Wounan and Kuna indigenous councils, NGOs, youth and child organizations, churches, workers' unions, business groups, universities and other citizens' interest groups. The Committee will promote coordination with the United Nations system within UNDAF.

36. The MTR will be key in reviewing changes in the situation of children and women in Panama, in light of the changing national economic context, and in assessing the effectiveness of the current programme objectives of achieving the desired changes for children's and women's rights and the reduction of disparities. During the MTR, the level of involvement of partner institutions in the achievement of the programme objectives will also be assessed in terms of the sustainability of joint programme efforts. This will also require a careful assessment of the country's political, social and economic environment. Also in 2001, UNICEF Panama and the regional office will implement common services, with both offices sharing all operational costs.

TABLE

LINKAGE OF PROGRAMME BUDGET AND STAFFING/STAFF COSTS

COUNTRY : PANAMA
PROGRAM : 2002-2006

PROGRAMME SECTION/AREAS AND FUNDING SOURCE	PROGRAMME BUDGET			POSTS a/										STAFF COSTS b/		
	RR	OR	TOTAL	D2/L7	D1/L6	P/L5	P/L4	P/L3	P/L2	IP	NP	GS	TOTAL	IP	LOCAL	TOTAL
REGULAR RESOURCES :																
INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOR 1/	1,140,000		1,140,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	351,022	351,022
SOCIAL MONITORING AND 2/	780,000		780,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	414,596	414,596
CROSS-SECTORAL COSTS	180,000		180,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	2	0	207,375	207,375
TOTAL RR	2,100,000		2,100,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	2	4	0	972,993	972,993
OTHER RESOURCES :																
INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOR 1/		1,270,000	1,270,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SOCIAL MONITORING AND 2/		980,000	980,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL OR		2,250,000	2,250,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL RR & OR	2,100,000	2,250,000	4,350,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	2	4	0	972,993	972,993
SUPPORT BUDGET	Operating costs		233,400													
	Staffing			0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	1	2	560,033	223,425	783,458
				0	0	0	1	0	0	1	2	3	6	560,033	1,196,418	1,756,451
GRAND TOTAL (RR + OR + SB)																
	Number of posts and staff costs:															
	Current programme cycle									1	1	5	9			
	At the end of proposed programme cycle (indicative only)									1	2	3	6	560,033	1,196,418	1,756,451

a/ Each post, regardless of its funding source, supports the country programme as a whole.
b/ Excludes temporary assistance and overtime.

RR = regular resources.
OR = other resources.
IP = international Professional.
NP = national Professional.
GS = General Service.
SB = support budget.

1/ INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOR THE SUSTAINABLE FULFILMENT OF CHILDREN'S AND WOMEN'S RIGHTS
2/ SOCIAL MONITORING AND ALLIANCES IN FAVOUR OF CHILDREN'S AND WOMEN'S RIGHTS